Trends in the Study of Aboriginal Health Risks in Canada

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Introduction

- Rapidly growing Canadian Aboriginal population
  - Increase of 46% from 1996 to 2006
  - Population of 1,172,790 in 2006 (50,485 Inuit, 389,785 Métis and 698,025 First Nations)

- Known health risk factors include socio-economic status, geographic location of residence, and differential access to health services

- Concept of “risk” has gained attention in recent years (disease, lifestyle, environmental exposures)
Introduction

- Previous review studies:
  - research on Canadian Aboriginal health (Young 2003);
  - trends in the peer reviewed social science health literature (Wilson and Young 2008); and
  - specific risk issues related to environmental contaminants (Van Oostdam 2005)

- However, trends in the amount, location and focus of health risk investigations and their representation in multiple types of literature have not been specifically examined
Study Objectives

- To examine trends in the study of health risks in Canadian Aboriginal populations from 1960 to 2007 (as represented in both the peer-reviewed and grey literature)
- To identify current patterns of understanding and possible research gaps in the literature
Methods: Peer-Reviewed Literature

- Searched using:
  - Academic Search Complete
  - Social Sciences Full Text
  - Humanities Full Text
  - Web of Science
  - Bibliography of Native North Americans

- Search terms used were “Canada” and “Indian” or “Métis” or “Inuit” or “Eskimo” or “Native” or “Aboriginal” or “First Nation”
Methods: Grey Literature

- Searched using:
  - Search engines (Google, Google Scholar, and Yahoo)
  - Online databases (Circumpolar Health Bibliographic Database - University of Manitoba, and Arctic Science and Technology Information System - University of Calgary)

- Search terms used were “Canada” and “risk” and “Indigenous” or “Aboriginal” or “First Nation(s)” or “Métis” or “Indian” or “Native” or “Inuit”
No. of Publications

- Grey Literature N=535
- Peer Reviewed Literature N=234
Proportion of Publications by Region

West (BC, AB); Prairies (SK, MB); Territories (includes Arctic); Atlantic (PEI, NB, NS, NFLD/LB)
Publications by Region per 10,000 Aboriginal residents

West (BC, AB); Prairies (SK, MB); Territories (includes Arctic); Atlantic (PEI, NB, NS, NFLD/LB)

Grey Literature N=535  Peer Reviewed Literature N=234
Publications by Health Topic

Grey Literature
- Infectious: 33.6%
- Mental: 8.8%
- Chronic: 10.7%
- Zoonotic: 15.7%
- Environment: 27.5%
- General: 33.6%

Peer Reviewed Literature
- Infectious: 4.3%
- Mental: 7.3%
- Chronic: 25.6%
- Zoonotic: 20.1%
- Environment: 20.1%
- General: 22.7%
Publications by Aboriginal Group

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Publication Type</th>
<th>Metis</th>
<th>Multiple Groups</th>
<th>Inuit</th>
<th>First Nations</th>
<th>Aboriginal</th>
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<td>7.3</td>
<td>20.4</td>
<td>24.9</td>
<td>45.8</td>
<td>1.7</td>
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<tr>
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<td>22.2</td>
<td>28.6</td>
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Conclusions

- Exponential increase in publications about Aboriginal health risk in Canada in the last 17 years

Trends:
- research focus on the North
- increased interest in environment and health issues

Gaps:
- mental health and addictions
- Métis health
- geographic areas outside of the North, particularly in the Western and Prairie provinces
Acknowledgements

- Support for this work was provided by:
  - The Community, Health & Environment Research Centre at the University of Alberta
  - Grants provided to C. Furgal through the ArcticNet Network Centres of Excellence, and Canadian Institutes of Health Research

- Our thanks are extended to K. Friendship and K. Breton-Honeyman for work in compiling grey literature source review and to A. Pujadas-Botey for assistance with the primary literature review.
References:


Young K.T. Review of research on Aboriginal populations in Canada: Relevance to their needs. British Medical Journal 2003; 327: 419-422.